



Requirements for Academic Progression & Graduation

Academic Progression

The Physician Assistant Program is designed to integrate didactic and clinical learning experiences to optimize competency as a medical provider. To achieve satisfactory academic progress in the Physician Assistant Program, the student must maintain a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.00/4.00 **each** semester and must successfully complete each course to continue progressing in the program. The PA Program considers a grade below “C -” in any of the Physician Assistant Program courses to represent unsatisfactory academic progress, which may result in referral to the student’s advisor, remediation, academic warning, academic probation or dismissal from the program. Individual courses may include further requirements; see course syllabi for additional details.

Students are required to successfully complete all didactic coursework and other activities as assigned by the program in the required time frame (12 months) and attain a **minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 each semester to be eligible to progress each semester**. A GPA of less than a 3.0 during any semester, will result in referral to the Academic Committee on Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may result in academic warning, academic probation or dismissal from the program.

Progression from didactic year to clinical year requires successful completion of all of the didactic year requirements. Any deficiencies, failures, and/or disciplinary action during the didactic year may limit the student’s ability to progress to the clinical year of the program.

Progression through clinical rotations requires successful completion of each Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SPCE) and attainment of a **minimum GPA of 3.00 each semester** to be eligible to progress during the clinical phase of training. A GPA of less than a 3.0 during a clinical year semester, will result in referral to the Academic Committee on Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may result in academic warning, academic probation or dismissal from the program. Any deficiencies, failures, and/or disciplinary action during the clinical year may limit the student’s ability to remain in the program, graduate on time, and/or participate in the graduation.

Progress from the clinical year to the final didactic semester (third year) requires successful completion of all of the clinical year requirements, including but not limited to preceptor evaluations, end of rotation exams, patient write-ups, oral presentations, writing assignments, poster presentations and logging requirements.

In addition, students must meet all of the program *Technical Standards* as well as the standards for professionalism and behavioral conduct. Failure to fulfill requirements in any of these areas



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

will result in referral to the Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may limit the student's ability to progress or remain in the program.

Academic Review:

PA Program faculty advisors will review each student's progress at the end of semester. The purpose of this review is to evaluate each student's academic status and progress towards completion of the Physician Assistant Program. Factors to be considered in this review include the following: a review of grades earned in **completed** courses, **professional development**, and **professional/ethical behavior**. An individual student advisement and evaluation report is created at the completion of this review; this report is then shared with the student. The student review is kept on file and referenced in the next end of semester review.

The academic review process exists to assist students with identification of problems and issues that may be associated with academic or professional difficulties. The process occurs so that appropriate guidance, advice and remediation options may be implemented.

Remediation

Didactic Remediation Definitions:

PA students who are unsuccessful in meeting the minimum program requirements and/or standards for successful completion of didactic course work will be required to complete remediation in the following areas:

1. **Remediation for course deficiencies:** The student is notified of their deficiency via a letter from the Program Director and is asked to meet with their academic advisor to develop an individualized remediation plan. The student is also referred to the Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may be provided with additional methods of remediation which may include but are not limited to referral to the Learning Resources Center, online learning modules, written assignments, and one-on-one review of key concepts.
2. **Remediation of practical skills:** Students in the didactic year are required to perform many practical skills essential to the education of the Physician Assistant student. Deficiency of a practical skill is defined as failure to meet the minimal competency required to perform a procedure proficiently. Students are remediated by repeating the deficient skill(s) under the supervision of faculty until they achieve an acceptable level of proficiency.
3. **Remediation of a Comprehensive Exam Deficiency:** The Comprehensive exam is composed of three parts: written, Observed Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) and an oral exam. If a student fails any component(s) of the comprehensive exam they are required to re-take the exam for the component(s) failed. Failure of the repeated exam and/or the overall comprehensive exam will result in referral to the Academic



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may result in dismissal from the program.

4. **Major Course Assessment Re-Test/Remediation:** A score below 73% on a major course assessment will require re-test/remediation. Successful completion of re-test/remediation will result in a maximum grade of 73%. Failure to successfully complete the re-test/remediation with a grade of 73% or better will result in referral to ACES and the score earned on the re-test/remediation will be considered the final grade for the re-test/remediation.

Clinical Remediation:

To remain in good academic standing all PA students must receive a grade of “C-” or better in all Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPE). Failure of a SCPE component (End-of-Rotation (EOR) Exam, SCPE assignments, projects or papers) will result in a meeting with the student’s advisor.

Remediation assignments are given to the student for failed clinical curriculum components until successful completion is achieved.

At the discretion of the advisor, the student may also be required to meet with the Program Director or Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES) for consideration of disciplinary action and/or further remediation. **Any failure of a preceptor evaluation** will result in a meeting with the Program Director or Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES).

Continued incidents of rotation component deficiencies or overall failure of a rotation will result in the student being referred to the Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES) for disciplinary action. Please refer to the Student Handbook for detailed information regarding the clinical year.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from the Charles R. Drew University Physician Assistant Program, and confer a Master of Health Science degree, the student **must** meet all of the following requirements:

1. Didactic Curriculum

- A student receiving a score below 73% on any **major course assessment or evaluation** is expected to meet with their advisor to determine a preliminary strategy for improved performance.
- Achieve a grade of “C-” (70 percent) or better in all PA Program **courses**.
 - i. A grade below “C-minus” (C-) in an overall course is considered unsatisfactory academic progress and will result in a review by the Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES). This review may result in the development of and individualized student



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

remediation plan, academic warning, academic probation, or dismissal from the PA program.

- An overall course grade of “D” or “F” in any course is considered a failure and will result in referral to the Academic Committee on Evaluation and Support (ACES) and may result in academic warning, academic probation or dismissal from the program. Students will not be allowed to progress in the program with a grade of “D” or “F” in any overall course.
 - Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 during **each** semester.
 - i. Grade point averages are not rounded up (for example a 2.99 is not a 3.0)
 - ii. Note: Students receiving course assessment grades of C or lower and/or course grades of C or lower may still pass a course but not achieve the minimum semester GPA requirement of 3.0. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain awareness of their grades and review each syllabus for assigned units and grading criteria.
 - iii. Grade point averages lower than a 3.0 will result in an automatic referral to ACES.
2. Clinical Curriculum:
- Achieve a score of “C-” (70 percent) or better for each overall Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE).
 - Academic performance in the second year is evaluated with end of rotation exams scores, preceptor evaluations, patient encounter documentation & logging and other course work requirements.
3. Program Completion:
- Successfully complete the program in 27 months.
 - i. Extensions to this time frame will be considered for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the university/program. Please also refer to Maximum Time to Degree Completion on this document.
 - The program does **not** decelerate students
 - Successfully complete **all** courses in the program
 - Successfully participate in and pass a Summative Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation and Grading Policy

Evaluation methods and grading are determined on a per-course basis by individual course instructors. See course syllabi for additional details.

- It is the responsibility of the student to review the posted syllabi at the beginning of each semester for each course and be aware of the units assigned and methods of evaluation for each individual course.

Grades:



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

The University uses a letter grade evaluation and reporting system based on a 4.0 grade point formula. Earned grades and grade points are awarded according to the following schedule:

Letter Grade		Range	Quality Points
A	=	93 - 100	4.00 - Excellent
A-	=	90 - 92	3.67 - Excellent
B+	=	87 - 89	3.33 - Above Average
B	=	83 - 86	3.00 - Above Average
B-	=	80 - 82	2.67 - Above Average
C+	=	77 - 79	2.33 - Average
C	=	73 - 76	2.00 - Average
C-	=	70 - 72	1.67 - Deficiency (Below Average)
D+	=	67 - 69	1.33 - Failure
D	=	63 - 66	1.00 - Failure
D-	=	60 - 62	0.67 - Failure
F	=	0 - 59	0.00 - Failure

Deceleration:

The Charles R. Drew PA Program utilizes the ARC-PA definition of deceleration: *The loss of a student from an entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the PA program.* Due to the curriculum sequencing and academic demands, the Charles R. Drew PA program does **not** offer a deceleration option for students.

Grade Appeal & Grievance:

The purpose of the procedures for appeal and grievances is to obtain an unbiased and fair solution. Academic grievance relates to academic issues associated with a course, classroom or during clinical instruction.

Please refer to the College of Science and Health Policy on Grade Appeal & Grievance. Information can be found in the *University Catalog* or on the CDU website (<https://www.cdrewu.edu/registrar>).

Professionalism and Behavioral Conduct Review:

Students who do not meet academic criteria requirements or who are observed exhibiting unprofessional behavior may be referred directly to the Program Director or Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES). This review may result in academic warning, academic probation or dismissal from the PA Program. Please refer to the Charles R. Drew PA Program Student Handbook for more details on this policy.

Summative Evaluation:

PA program faculty complete a Summative Evaluation of each student prior to graduation. All students are **required** to participate in and successfully pass a Summative Evaluation to be eligible to graduate. The Summative Evaluation includes:



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

- A review of the student's performance on the Comprehensive Exam (written and oral).
- A review of the PACKRAT exam performance- this exam is **not** graded. The results of this exam are provided to the student to assist them in preparing for the PANCE exam.
- A review of the student's overall performance in the PA program including: didactic semester GPAs, academic performance and clinical year performance.
- A professionalism review.
- A review of the minimum requirements necessary to meet the Program Student Learning Outcomes:

- Adapted from the PA profession competencies, the CDU PA program competencies* are the overarching summative qualities required of all graduates upon completion of the program in order to be prepared for clinical practice. To ascertain the acquisition of program competencies, the program continuously assesses student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes are specific and measurable building blocks that need to be attained over the 27 months of study.
- **Medical Knowledge [MK]:** PAs must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, PAs are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations.
- **Interpersonal & Communication Skills [ICS]:** PAs must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system.
- **Patient Care [PC]:** PAs must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable.
- **Professionalism [Prof]:** PAs must express positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, professionalism involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. PAs must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. PAs must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.
- **Practice-Based Learning & Improvement [PBLI]:** Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices.
- **System-Based Care [SBC]:** PAs must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care. PAs should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part.

*Adopted from "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession" (originally adopted 2005; revised 2012) which serves as a road map for the development and maintenance of competencies among PAs and the PA profession. Competencies will be acquired during the course of the 27-months of study and will be evaluated using a variety of instruments including, but not limited to: written and practical examinations, student projects and presentations, preceptor evaluations, faculty observations, graduate surveys and PANCE results.

If a student fails to meet minimum requirements for any part of the summative evaluation (**excluding** the PACKRAT examination) the student will be retested and/or referred to the Academic Committee for Evaluation and Support (ACES); dismissal from the program is a possible outcome from this meeting.



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

- **Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO):** Graduates of the CDU PA Program will demonstrate entry-level proficiency necessary to perform the following functions and tasks:
 - PSLO1: Elicit, efficiently and effectively, pertinent information in a medical history and perform an appropriate physical exam for patients of various ages and clinical settings [MK, ICS, PC]
 - PSLO2: Select, order and interpret laboratory and diagnostic studies [MK, PC]
 - PSLO 3: Integrate data obtained through history, physical examination and laboratory/diagnostic studies to develop a differential and final diagnosis [MK, PC]
 - PSLO 4: Select and perform routine technical skills and clinical procedures [MK, PC]
 - PSLO 5: Develop and implement patient management plans based on evidence-based clinical judgement and respect for patient preferences and cultural values [MK, PC, ICS, Prof, PBLI, SBP]
 - PSLO 6: Record and orally present clinical findings in a clear, concise, and organized manner to patients, families and members of the healthcare team [ICS, PC, Prof]
 - PSLO 7: Demonstrate professionalism, honesty and integrity in all interactions with colleagues, patients and families [Prof, PC, ICS]
 - PSLO 8: Appraise, integrate and apply scientific and medical research to the practice of medicine [MK, PC, Prof, PBLI, SBP]
 - PSLO 9: Incorporate the concepts and principles of the social and behavioral sciences to identify and address health disparities and advocate for underserved populations [MK, PC, Prof, PBLI, SBP]

Program competencies and learning outcomes were revised in Fall, 2020

Awarding Master of Health Science - Physician Assistant Degree:

Charles R. Drew University holds commencement during the summer semester. Students in good standing during their clinical year who are eligible to enter the final didactic fall semester will be required to participate in the graduation ceremonies in June; however, the Master of Health Science degree will not be conferred until December of that year. All coursework, clinical rotations and any other PA program graduation requirements **must** be finished prior to receiving the Master of Health Science-Physician Assistant Degree.

Students finishing the PA Program later than expected, will receive their Physician Assistant Degree after completing all didactic and clinical work as well as any additional program requirements. Any student finishing the PA Program late must complete all the program requirements within 3 years to be award a degree and certificate of completion.

- Successful completion of the PA Program must occur in 27 months
 - Extensions to this time frame will be considered for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the university/program.
 - The program does **not** decelerate students.



Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
College of Science & Health
Physician Assistant Program

Withdrawal and Dismissal:

Any student who wishes to withdraw from the program is required to meet with the program director. Withdrawal from the Physician Assistant Program must be done in writing and include the student's signature, date and be copied to the Dean of the College of Health and Science, Office of the Registrar and Graduate Financial Aid. University procedures for withdrawal can be found in the University Catalog or online at <https://www.cdrewu.edu/registrar> . Withdrawal from the program is final.

A student may be dismissed from the Charles R. Drew University Physician Assistant Program for failure to meet academic performance requirements as well as infractions of the policies, procedures, and regulations. Dismissed students may not reapply for admission. Dismissal may occur in the didactic or clinical phases of the program.

All students who either withdraw or are dismissed from the PA program are required to meet with the University Registrar and Graduate Financial Aid to complete necessary paperwork and officially withdraw from the PA program prior to leaving the university.

Appeal of Suspension or Dismissal:

Dismissed students may appeal the sanctions placed on them by the program to the College of Science and Health. Appeals must be submitted in writing within ten days of the receipt of a suspension or dismissal notice. Information on the appeal process is available in the University Catalog at <https://www.cdrewu.edu/registrar>

Harassment:

The CDU PA program follows the University's policy with regards to harassment. The University has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment, harassment, bullying, violent acts and threats of violence against staff, faculty or visitors. If any student encounters conduct believed to be inconsistent with University policy, he or she is urged to report the information immediately to the University's Human Resources Office at (323) 563-5827. For further details refer to the University catalog or website at <https://www.cdrewu.edu/registrar>

Academic Committee on Evaluation & Support (ACES):

The Academic Committee on Evaluation & Support serves the purpose of investigating academic, clinical and professionalism issues. The purpose of the committee is to provide guidance and necessary recommendations to best assure student success. The committee has authority to assign remediation activities and provide recommendations to the student. The committee also has authority to recommend dismissal of a student from the PA Program. Dismissal recommendations will be forwarded to the PA Program Director.

Members:

At Least 3 PA Program Faculty
PA Program Medical Director